DENISE PROVOS

NEPC CO-

Introducing New NEPC Co-Presidents

May 26, 2022 by New England Poetry Club

A warm welcome to Denise Provost and Doug Holder

The board of the New England Poetry Club is pleased to announce that we have elected Denise Provost and Doug Holder to serve as our new co-presidents. They will take their official positions on June 4, 2022.

We extend a warm welcome to both and look forward to working together with them. Additionally, we will have more information soon about how to celebrate our outgoing president, Mary Buchinger.
Below you will find notes to members from Denise and Doug as well as their bios.
Yours in poetry,
NEPC BOARD

Dear NEPC Members

I am honored and thrilled to have been elected, with my friend and colleague Doug Holder, as co-president of the New England Poetry Club. I love poetry with all my heart and am grateful to NEPC for providing opportunities for poets to develop their craft and to hear each other's' voices. These connections have been especially important during pandemic-time.
As we adjust personally to the many changes in our world, it's good to look at how an esteemed institution like NEPC might expand and even reimagine itself. Thanks to the current leadership of NEPC – including its deeply engaged board members – the club is on a solid footing and has increased its service to a broad range of writers. It is my humble hope to help build on this foundation in fruitful ways.
I hope to find ways for us to build our skills and get more from our literary lives, individually and as a strengthened community. I want to explore with all of you how poetry might regain its place of honor in public life and in education.
Ultimately, I want to hear from all of you about your aspirations and ideas from making NEPC a valuable part of our lives together.
Warmest best wishes,
Denise Provost

Dear NEPC Members,

Ever since I can remember I have been writing poetry. In fact, I can say poetry saved my life. It was there for me when my wife was dying, it was there for me when I was on a night train to NYC; and I held my elderly mother's wizened hand– it centered me when I was adrift; it was a companion to me when I was alone and

living in a furnished room staring at the hypnotic bright coil of a hotplate. At first it was a very personal thing for me, but as the years went by, I joined the poetry community in Boston and Cambridge. I think I had a calling to promote poetry and poets–so for years I have been interviewing them, trying to see what makes them tick, what their lives are like, etc… I started a literary press; I have a long running literary column in the city paper that features a poet each week; I run the Newton Free Library Poetry Series, to name a few. But most of all I have found wonderful friends who have enriched my life so much. Being co-president of the New England Poetry Club is an honor, and I see it as an extension of the work I have been doing for many years.
Doug Holder

About the Co-Presidents

Denise Provost

Long ago, Denise Provost attended Bennington College to write and study poetry. In an era of activism, she became a lawyer, worked in local government, eventually running for elective office. Provost served on Somerville's city council for seven years, then in the Massachusetts House of Representatives for fifteen years.
Women in public life have a hard enough time being taken seriously, so Provost kept her poetry under wraps for many years. About a dozen years ago, she started sending poems off for publication in journals, writing book reviews, would occasionally read a few poems in public places. Provost eventually discovered that her literary urges could no longer be suppressed.
Provost received the Best Love Sonnet award from the Maria C. Faust Sonnet Competition in 2012, and the New England Poetry Club's Samuel Washington Allen Prize in 2021. Her chapbook *Curious Peach* was published by Ibbetson Street Press in 2019. Her collection *City of Stories* was published by Cervena Barva Press in 2021.

Doug Holder

Doug Holder is the founder of the Ibbetson Street Press. He is the arts editor of The Somerville Times, and the curator of the Newton Free Library Poetry Series. Holder teaches writing at Endicott College and Bunker Hill Community College. His own work has been published in such places as the *Worcester Review*, *Lilipoh*, *Rattle*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Cafe Review* and elsewhere.
For over thirty years, Holder ran poetry groups at McLean Hospital for psychiatric patients. Holder has received a citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives for his work as a poet, editor, publisher, and professor. The "Doug Holder Papers Collection" is archived at the University at Buffalo libraries. Many of his interviews of poets and writers are in collections at Harvard University and U/Mass Boston. Holder is also the co-founder of the literary group "The Bagel Bards." Holder's latest collection of poetry is "The Essential Doug Holder…" (Big Table Books).

May New Poetry & Open-Mic
Congrats to Jean L. Kreiling